1.0 Introduction

This guide aims to provide an outline of the key steps that managers should consider when approaching a potential staffing restructure or reorganisation. Plans for such changes may, for example, follow a review of service requirements that may result in the need to change existing structures and/or functions. In certain circumstances, proposals for such change may potentially impact on the number or type of staff required in particular areas of work, every effort should be made to avoid redundancies.

This guide is not intended to replace College policies and procedures and should be read in conjunction with the ‘Change Management Policy and Procedure’.

Any change can cause concern for staff, and where such change may result in redeployment or redundancy, it is important that we consider the member of staff's individual interest with care and consideration while ensuring that departmental business objectives are met. This guide aims to provide assistance to managers as they approach such change and has been divided into sections to cover ‘before’, ‘during’ and ‘after’ the restructuring process.

Part One covers the steps that managers should take when preparing for a restructure.

Part Two covers the steps that managers should take during the formal consultation process.

Part Three covers the steps that managers should take after the consultation period has ended to implement the new structure successfully.

2.0 PART ONE – PREPARING FOR A RESTRUCTURE

2.1 Staff Expenditure Schemes
Before pursuing any form of organisational restructure that may result in significant job change and/or redundancy, managers should first consider alternative measures which
could produce some flexibility in the management of staff expenditure or could serve to minimise staff redundancies.

These may include:
- Natural turnover;
- Voluntary accelerated turnover payments, where it will meet operational needs;
- Transfer of cost of appointments wholly or in part to external funds;
- Redeployment and training including to other parts of Imperial College;
- Consideration of freezing external recruitment;
- Voluntary job sharing;
- Voluntary part-time work;
- Voluntary purchase of additional annual leave entitlement;
- Voluntary unpaid sabbatical leave for personal refreshment;
- Voluntary early retirement or voluntary redundancy where it will meet operational needs;
- Savings in non-staff budget;
- Other measures to make savings if the reason for the restructure is purely financial rather than changing needs of the organisation;
- Explore alternative funding.

All of the above options are entirely voluntary in terms of staff participation, and (subject to any necessary approvals) are at the discretion of local managers to adopt, based on operational requirements.

Further information on these schemes is available from the local HR teams.

2.2 Management and Support

There are a number of factors to consider when preparing for a restructure:

What support is available to managers?

Human Resources (HR):
The local HR teams will provide advice and support to managers throughout the process including:
- Advising on the change management policy and procedure;
- Drafting the business case;
- Preparing for formal consultation;
- Arranging and/or attending group and individual consultation meetings;
- Assisting managers to collate feedback and comments on the business case from the consultation period;
- Providing feedback to staff and trade unions regarding the outcome of the consultation;
- Reviewing new and amended job descriptions for the new structure;

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• Advising on appropriate selection processes where redeployment or redundancy may be possible outcomes;
• Guidance on redeployment processes, e.g. slotting in; ring fencing;
• Seeking suitable alternative employment for staff seeking redeployment;
• Assisting in the redundancy process, e.g. applications for voluntary retirement; voluntary redundancy, compulsory redundancy;
• Preparing redundancy quotes and pensions costs;
• Strategies to successfully embed the new structure.

HR will continue to provide ongoing support and guidance following the implementation of the new structure.

Occupational Health (OH):
The Occupational Health Service can offer advice and guidance to those staff involved in the restructuring process who are finding it difficult to cope with the proposed changes, or managers of staff who are on long term sickness absence and who are affected by the restructuring.

Confidential Care:
This is a service provided by the Occupational Health Service which utilises an independent organisation in the provision of free and confidential counselling services to all staff. Confidential Care’s helpline and website can provide information and advice on a wide range of issues including financial/legal concerns and family care. Staff can continue to have access to this service up to three months after they leave the College’s employment.

The Learning and Development Centre (LDC):
The LDC provides a variety of support to staff who are affected by a restructure or reorganisation including:
• Preparing CVs and job applications
• Interview skills development

Such support can be arranged on an individual or group basis. Early contact should be made with the LDC for specific advice.

2.3 Communication during a restructure

Restructuring is, for most people involved, an ultimately emotional experience. However rational a person is on a day to day basis, the threat of changing working conditions, loss of colleagues and possibly the loss of one’s own job is extremely stressful. In such circumstances, it is normal to fear the worst, give credence to rumour and fill in the blanks with the worst possible scenarios. Consequently, it is vitally important to communicate well and often. Regular meetings help, and a meeting that says nothing has changed since the last meeting is more reassuring than no meeting at all.

The aim of communication should be to inform, support and ease concern. For many the concern is not just about the possibility of losing one’s job, but also about such things as the

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process by which decisions are made and the impact that lack of recent experience of application procedures may have on those who have not had to apply for a job for many years.

An early **communications plan** that establishes the expectation of regular briefings and exchanges of view should be published. Restructures seldom suffer from too many opportunities to talk, but often flounder in a mire of unresolved anxieties and rumours.

Points to consider when planning a communication programme include:

- The recognised trade unions will be informed of any proposal for restructuring and the communications plan as soon as possible so that any communications from the trade unions to their members - e.g. level of support at individual consultation meetings - can be included in any communication plan.
- All staff members who will be affected, directly or indirectly, by the change should be informed as soon as possible and preferably at the same time;
- Formal consultation with staff directly affected by the proposals should run concurrently with collective consultations with the trade unions and commence as soon as possible
- Face to face communication works better than emails or letters, although written back up after a meeting is always useful;
- Separate meetings for those directly and indirectly affected may be a good idea;
- 1:1s are an option but staff must advised of their right be accompanied by a TU representative. Choose a neutral setting – a meeting room rather than a manager’s office;
- What are the rumours and how can these be reliably refuted?

**Communicating with those who are not at work**

It is extremely important to ensure that communication includes any member of staff who is affected by the restructure and who may be absent during the restructuring process. In particular, special attention may be required for staff on:

- Annual leave;
- Long term sickness absence;
- Maternity leave and adoption leave;
- Paternity/parental leave;
- Secondment;
- Sabbatical

Guidance should be sought from HR on the method of communication for contacting these staff on specific types of leave as some of these categories have particular legal rights during any formal restructuring consultation. In all cases, staff on leave should be given the business case for consideration and invited to attend a consultation meeting. Consideration may be given to home visits for staff on maternity leave or long term sickness absence.

**3.0 PART TWO – FORMAL CONSULTATION PROCESS**

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3.1 Start of the Consultation Period
The consultation will begin at the earliest opportunity and must be completed within the timescale before notices of redundancy dismissals are issued.

At the first formal consultation meeting (whether this is an individual or group consultation meeting) the manager should explain:

- The nature of the proposed change;
- The likely impact on the staff/team;
- The process to be followed;
- Measures to avoid and mitigate the effects of the restructure.
- That comments or views on the proposals will be considered throughout the consultation period and how staff should submit these.

HR will give advice on the process, policy and redeployment and will normally follow up with written confirmation of the outcome of the individual formal consultation meetings.

3.2 During the Consultation Period
Staff and Trade Unions may raise any appropriate questions either verbally or in writing and these may cover some of the following below:

- Questions on the business case and the process followed;
- Feedback and comments on the business case;
- Enter a counter proposal on the business case for consideration prior to a decision being made;
- Request for additional consultation meetings;
- Questions on redundancy payments and redeployment.
- Requests for additional information not provided in the original business case.

3.3 End of the Consultation Period
Following the end of the consultation period, a final decision will be taken on whether the restructure should proceed, and if the decision is that it should proceed, the form of the restructure should be defined.

The recognised trade unions and all staff affected by the changes will be informed in writing of how the new structure will be implemented.

4.0 PART THREE – IMPLEMENTING THE NEW STRUCTURE

The implementation of the new structure may include:

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4.1 Job Matching/Slotting In for posts that are the same or substantially the same
This is the first step in the allocation of posts in the new structure. Once the quantity and type of post have been confirmed, any scope for staff to be ‘slotted in’ to the posts without the need for a selection process can be considered. This applies where posts in the new structure are the same or substantially the same (i.e. 80% or more) in terms of skills, experience and competencies. In such instances, there will be no changes to terms and conditions of employment and no selection process.

If there are more staff at risk of redundancy than available posts, selection for the posts will need to take place. The Department/Section may, subject to operating needs, request applications for voluntary redundancy from a wider group of staff in their area. Doing this may avoid the need for compulsory redundancy and may provide opportunities for redeploying into vacated posts those staff who are at risk and have the appropriate skills for the vacant posts. Staff should be provided with any details of voluntary severance terms for consideration.

4.2 Selection for New of Significantly Changed Posts within the New Structure
In cases where all posts have significantly changed or have been replaced; where staff will be considered for different posts; or where there is a diminishing number of the same posts, specific selection arrangements will apply and will be communicated to all affected staff.

All staff at risk of redundancy will be invited to apply for positions within the new structure and to express their interest in the posts for which they wish to be considered.

See appendix five for guidance on how to select for posts in the new structure.

4.3 Identifying Preferences
Following consideration of the redeployment measures outlined in the Change Management Procedure staff may be invited to express their preference in order of priority for redeployment and/or voluntary severance. The opportunity to express preferences will be open with a specific deadline – usually two weeks. This may be adjusted in the event that staff are absent on annual leave etc. Staff will be informed that preferences will be taken into consideration but cannot be guaranteed. Staff will be informed that managers will instigate a selection process in the event that they need to redeploy more people than available posts. In the event that voluntary severance or redeployment cannot be agreed with an individual, the compulsory redundancy process will be followed with the right to appeal. In these circumstances, statutory redundancy payments will apply.

4.4 Redeployment
The purpose of redeployment is to seek suitable alternative employment within the College for staff whose post is at risk of redundancy. See the Change Management Policy and Procedure for details on suitable alternative employment, training and trial periods.

4.5 Embedding the New Structure

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In any programme of restructuring, redeployment and redundancy, it is important to recognize and respond to the needs of the team concerned as its constituent members cope with the emotional turmoil of what is going on around them. It is all too easy to assume that those staff whose jobs were not at risk and those who may have felt at risk at some stage, but who have been slotted in, will feel positive at the outcome. Nothing could be further from the truth and the term ‘Survivor Syndrome’, coined to describe the emotional impact of the aftermath of serious trauma, has been adopted to cover the psychological impact of major change that has seen the loss of colleagues.

Once the final redundancies have taken effect and the newly configured team is in place, it is a good idea to use a team development event to focus clearly on new objectives, roles and relationships. It is not sufficient to assume that what worked before the change will continue to serve in new circumstances. All remaining work should be identified at the outset, in the original proposal and it should be clearly stated how it is intended that this will be dealt with. If it is identified that some of this work will be carried out by the remaining staff, then it may be necessary for some of their current work or roles to be replaced by the new work.

Post-implementation Checklist
- Consider members of staff’s feelings and needs
- Recognise efforts and achievements
- Develop members of staff
- Reward (not always financial)
- Communicate
- Team build